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THE THIRTEENTH CCP CONGRESS AND PROSPECTS FOR REFORM

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Author: Marcia R. Ristaino

*Federal Research Division
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PREFACE

This analytical essay examines the new leadership and ruling bodies produced by the 13th Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Congress and discusses the current political process and configuration of power in China. The new leadership and power structure is compared with the ones that resulted from the 12th CCP Congress held in September 1982.

The essay also examines innovations in ideology and policy associated with the 13th Congress, discusses the leadership succession question, and considers current problems and long range prospects for the reform program in China.

The essay is based on open-source materials including Xinhua News Agency reports, China Daily, Beijing Review, provincial radio broadcasts, Wen Wei Po (Hong Kong), Far Eastern Economic Review (Hong Kong), and information generated from the FRD computerized database on current Chinese leadership.

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SUMMARY

The 13th CCP Congress, held between 25 October and 1 November 1987, elected a younger and better educated leadership presided over by a strengthened, 5-member CCP Political Bureau Standing Committee. This primary body, whose members' ages average 13 years less than the average of its predecessor, appears balanced politically between members preferring innovation and change and those concerned with maintaining a conservative pace of reform. Veteran charismatic leaders Deng Xiaoping and Chen Yun have retired from this body, which now wields power based on its institutional strength rather than on the power of individual leaders.

The smaller (11 members and 1 alternate) 13th CCP Political Bureau, the members of which average sixty-five years of age, appears even more oriented towards achieving reform goals than the 12th CCP Political Bureau. Two-thirds of its members are college educated. PLA participation has been significantly reduced to only two members, both believed to be supportive of reform initiatives. The CCP Secretariat has been diminished both in size and stature, becoming a 5-member staff arm of the Political Bureau and its Standing Committee.

Compared with the 12th CCP Central Committee (CCP-CC), the 13th CCP-CC, consisting of 175 members and 110 alternates, is younger, averaging 55.2 years of age, and better educated (73.3% are college educated). Its leadership is representative of the Deng era in that only 22 members (13%) joined the CCP-CC before 1982. PLA representation has decreased slightly, in keeping with continued emphasis on reducing the PLA's role in the political process and instead focusing its attention on increased professionalization.

Civilian representation on the CCP-CC is fairly balanced between the central and provincial levels. The heaviest representation comes from government cadres, a development which might provide CCP General Secretary Zhao Ziyang, who previously served as premier for 7 years, with an additional power base.

China's political process has become further institutionalized as a result of the 13th CCP Congress. The strengthened Political Bureau Standing Committee is the principal policy-making body and a regular forum for resolving leadership conflicts. Major reform opponents have retired from the Political Bureau to the Central Advisory Commission (CAC). Zhao Ziyang, in the course of preparing drafts of the key political report for the Congress, succeeded in building a viable leadership consensus by consulting influential groups and managing debates on key reform issues. Because Deng Xiaoping conferred on Zhao the second-ranking military position, Zhao's prospects for consolidating his leadership are stronger.

Zhao also assumed a major ideological role at the Congress when he presented the concept that China is in the initial stage of socialism. Zhao now is identified with a major theoretical explanation of China's

historical condition as it relates to modernization and reform and has acquired the august role of being an interpreter of Marxism-Leninism in light of Chinese conditions.

Political structural reforms discussed in Zhao's report entail separation of party and government functions, clarification of lines of authority, increased accountability of leaders for their responsibilities, and promotion of productive dialogue between and among all leadership levels. To the extent that the goals of enhanced institutionalization are realized, the party-government system in China will function in a more moderate and predictable fashion.

Party reform initiatives defined at the Congress are predicated upon systemic changes occurring in social and political relationships, a development that appears particularly threatening to middle-level party interests. Economic functions are being transferred to enterprise managers; major government functions seem destined to be better performed by professional civil servants, and emphasis on increased dialogue circumvents the party's authoritative voice in local affairs. While present and potential reform opponents appear to lack a key spokesman in Beijing, the CAC, with veteran and dissenting leaders, could provide a power base for conservative members on the Political Bureau Standing Committee, if conditions sour. Nevertheless, with the new leadership in key organizations of power and apparently supportive of Zhao and the reform program, the prospects both for implementation of the reforms and for Zhao's survival and continued leadership after Deng appear reasonably good.

1. INTRODUCTION

The 13th Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Congress, held between 25 October and 1 November 1987, elected a younger and better educated leadership, provided theoretical justification for reform, and ratified policy initiatives which further strengthened the reform program in China. These major developments followed an eventful period of almost 1 year during which CCP General Secretary Hu Yaobang, generally considered Deng's successor, was demoted, followed by a campaign against bourgeois liberalization or Western influences. Then-acting CCP General Secretary Zhao Ziyang attempted to circumscribe this conservative-backed drive by placing off limits the economy and arts and literature, focusing it instead on the "positive education" of party cadres. Zhao's initiative won Deng Xiaoping's backing in the face of continuing and forceful conservative opposition. With Deng's support, Zhao was able to begin formulating an ideological platform for the comprehensive reform program. This platform became the basis for the key political report, which, along with leadership selection, became the focus of the crucial meetings held at Beidaihe in July and August 1987 in preparation for the October Party Congress.

2. THE NEW LEADERSHIP

a. The Political Bureau

As a result of the 13th Congress, leadership became concentrated in China's senior body, the five-member Standing Committee of the Political Bureau. Before this Congress, the Standing Committee also served as China's primary ruling body, but its strength was based mainly on the individual power and revolutionary credentials of its charismatic members such as Deng Xiaoping and Chen Yun. Following Deng Xiaoping's example, veteran leader Chen Yun along with former CCP General Secretary Hu Yaobang and President of the People's Republic of China Li Xiannian retired and were replaced on the Standing Committee of the 13th Political Bureau by four younger members--Li Peng, Hu Qili, Qiao Shi and Yao Yilin--elevated from Political Bureau membership.

Li Peng, raised as the adopted son of Zhou Enlai and trained in the Soviet Union as an engineer, also serves as Acting Premier. Hu Qili, a former Communist Youth League secretary and mayor of Tianjin, is in charge of propaganda work within the Political Bureau. Qiao Shi has experience in intelligence and security affairs. Yao Yilin, at age 71, is the oldest leader and concurrently head of the State Planning Commission. These four leaders, together with Zhao Ziyang, average 63.6 years of age. The average age of members of the 12th Standing Committee was 77 years, 13 years greater.

The political orientation of this body appears balanced between Zhao and Hu Qili, who represent reform positions that advocate change and innovation, and Li Peng and Yao Yilin, who are associated with conservative approaches concerned with preserving the status quo. Qiao

Shi, whose politics are less well known, occupies a position somewhere in between, but reportedly is trusted by the conservative old guard. Shortly after the close of the Congress, Zhao strengthened his position on this authoritative body with the appointment of his personal chief of staff Bao Tong, a key reform theorist, as Political Secretary, Standing Committee, 13th CCP Political Bureau.

As Table 1 indicates, the 13th Political Bureau, with 17 full members and one alternate member, is smaller than the 12th Political Bureau, which included 20 members and 2 alternates.

Table 1

The 13th CCP Political Bureau

n=18

Standing Committee Members

Zhao Ziyang, CCP General Secretary
 Li Peng, Acting Premier
 Hu Qili, Secretary, CCP Secretariat
 Qiao Shi, Vice Premier
 Yao Yilin, Vice Premier

Full Members

	<u>Birthdate</u>	<u>Appointment Date*</u>
Zhao Ziyang	1919	1982
Li Peng	1928	1985
Hu Qili	1929	1985
Qiao Shi	1924	1985
Yao Yilin	1917	1985

Members Continuing from the 12th Political Bureau

Hu Yaobang	1915	1982
Tian Jiyun	1929	1982
Wan Li	1916	1982
Wu Xueqian	1921	1982
Yang Shangkun	1907	1982

Members New to the Political Bureau

Jiang Zemin	1926	1987
Li Ruihuan	1934	1987
Li Tieying	1936	1987
Li Ximing	1926	1987
Qin Jiwei	1914	1987
Song Ping	1917	1987
Yang Rudai	1926	1987

Alternate Member

Deng Guangen

1929

1987

*A Conference of Party Delegates in September 1985 elected new Political Bureau members. The 12th CCP Congress elected a Political Bureau and Central Committee in September 1982.

Eleven members of the 12th Political Bureau (including alternate member Chen Muhua) were retired. Of these eleven, the most notable are Deng Xiaoping, Chen Yun, Peng Zhen and Li Xiannian--all Long March veterans who, with the exception of Deng Xiaoping, are considered conservative. Military representation was significantly reduced with the retirements of Yang Dezhi, Yu Qiuli, Zhang Aiping, and Hong Xuezhai. Only Qin Jiwei and Yang Shangkun, both firm Deng supporters, remain on the 13th Political Bureau, indicating a reduced role for the PLA in the policymaking process.

The composition of the new Political Bureau, which has members with an average age of 65, more than two-thirds of whom are college educated, represents a continuation of the program to promote younger and better educated leaders. In addition, the membership reflects the selection of leaders having major responsibilities in party and state affairs as well as some from key urban and regional centers crucial to the success of the reform program. Three of the seven new members reportedly have close ties with Zhao Ziyang. Jiang Zemin, formerly Minister of the Electronics Industry and in charge of its restructuring, is the mayor of Shanghai, where serious economic and student problems that will require continued monitoring and discussion have surfaced. Li Tieying has been an activist in national economic restructuring. And Yang Rudai is the current CCP Secretary in Sichuan and served under Zhao during Zhao's tenure as Sichuan CCP Secretary (December 1975-March 1980). His appointment is significant because Sichuan has long served as a trial area and model for reform initiatives. The overall political orientation of the Political Bureau membership appears more weighted toward reform goals than the orientation of the balanced Standing Committee, and thus can provide a power base for Zhao's use in influencing and resolving future policy conflicts.

b. The Secretariat

Changes have occurred in both the size and the function of the CCP Secretariat. Its membership, under the direction of Secretary Hu Qili, has been reduced from ten members to five, including Qiao Shi, Rui Xingwen, Yan Mingfu, and alternate member Wen Jiabao. According to Article 21 of the party constitution revised at the 13th Congress, "the Secretariat is the working office of the Central Committee's Political Bureau and its Standing Committee," with the latter body appointing its members. The Secretariat now acts as a staff arm of the Political Bureau rather than as an alternate power center as it did previously.

Two Secretariat members (Rui Xingwen and Wen Jiabao) have previous ties to Zhao. New members on the Secretariat have expertise in urban economic reform, party organization, and National People's Congress affairs. In addition to Hu Qili, Qiao Shi is the only other senior leader serving on this body. Qiao also is 1st Secretary of the streamlined (69 members--previously 130) Central Discipline Inspection Commission.

c. The Central Committee

The 1,936 delegates to the congress, for the first time, had a choice of candidates for positions on the 13th CCP Central Committee. There were 9 (about 5 percent) more candidates than the 175 positions on the 13th CCP Central Committee (CCP-CC) and 13 (about 12 percent) more candidates than the 110 alternate positions. Almost half (150) of the 12th CCP-CC did not win re-election to the 13th (of the 210 full members, 108 or 51 percent were not re-elected). The 175 members and 110 alternates elected averaged 55.2 years of age. The new leaders also are better educated; official Chinese sources report that 209 of the members and alternates or 73.3 percent of the 13th CCP-CC are college educated.

PLA representation on the 13th CCP-CC decreased slightly, with 52 or 18 percent of the total (full and alternate members) memberships held by professional military leaders or those with clear military associations--19 at the national level and 33 in provincial or regional commands. Seventy-five or 22 percent of the 12th CCP-CC full members (47) and alternate members (28) were from the PLA. This diminished number is in keeping with the continued emphasis on reducing the PLA's role in the political process and focusing attention on increased professionalization of the PLA. Table 2 describes PLA participation on the 13th CCP-CC.

Table 2

PLA Representation on the 13th CCP-CC

n=52

	<u>National Leaders</u>	<u>Military Region and District Leaders</u>	<u>Commanders</u>	<u>Political Officers</u>
Members	12 (23%)	16 (31%)	15 (29%)	9 (17%)
Alternates	7 (14%)	17 (33%)	17 (33%)	3 (6%)

The number of full members on the CCP-CC was reduced by 17 percent, from 210 members on the 12th CCP-CC to 175 members on the 13th. Thirty-eight members are new to the 13th CCP-CC; 22 were 12th CCP-CC alternates elevated to full membership on the 13th CCP-CC. The number of alternates on the 13th CCP-CC was reduced by 20 percent,

from 138 alternates on the 12th CCP-CC to 110 on the 13th. These changes indicate a significant turnover and reflect a leadership representative of the Deng era. Only 13 percent (22 members) of those on the 13th CCP-CC joined the CCP-CC before 1982.

All 30 CCP provincial secretaries (including the one for Hainan Island, soon to be elevated to provincial status) were elected to the 13th CCP-CC. The largest concentration of civilian CCP-CC memberships (including members and alternates) is clustered at the provincial-municipal level, with 101 memberships. Representation from the central CCP and government organizations is slightly lower, with 98 memberships. Added together, these figures suggest a fairly balanced distribution of membership on the CCP-CC. The largest functional group has primarily government responsibilities, with 108 places or 38 percent of the memberships. This membership grouping could be another base of support for Zhao Ziyang, who served as premier for 7 years, a period of time when many of these new CCP-CC appointees were moving up in the government system.

Heavy representation from government cadres on the party Central Committee does not necessarily indicate a failure of the recently emphasized policy of separating party and government functions. Government cadres serving on the CCP-CC are a select group meant to have concurrent access to the authoritative party political-policy line. The new policy separating party and government functions is not aimed at this group but instead at party incumbents in positions which allow them to exercise interference in government administrative and day-to-day affairs. Table 3 illustrates the nature of party and government representation on the 13th CCP-CC. Table 4 shows the representation of non-party and government groups. Table 5 summarizes the leadership composition of the 13th CCP-CC. Women comprise 8 percent (22 memberships) of the 13th CCP-CC, as compared to 6.9 percent (24 memberships) on the 12th CCP-CC.

Table 3

Party and Government Representation on the 13th CCP-CC

n=197

	<u>Members</u>	<u>Alternates</u>
Party Functions	66 (34%)	23 (12%)
Government Functions	70 (36%)	38 (19%)
Central-level Party and Government	76 (39%)	22 (11%)
Provincial-Municipal Party and Government	62 (32%)	39 (20%)

Table 4

Representation of Non-Party and Government Groups on the 13th CCP-CC

n=49

	<u>Members</u>	<u>Alternates</u>
Education	2 (4%)	5 (10%)
Science and Technology	1 (2%)	4 (8%)
Mass Organizations	4 (8%)	1 (2%)
Unknown	0	16 (33%)

Table 5

Composition of the 13th CCP Central Committee

n=285

	<u>CCP</u>	<u>Government</u>	<u>PLA</u>	<u>Other*</u>	<u>Unknown</u>
Full Members (175)	66 (38%)	70 (40%)	28 (10%)	7 (3%)	0
Alternate Members (110)	23 (21%)	38 (35%)	24 (8%)	10 (4%)	16 (15%)
Totals (285)	89 (31%)	108 (38%)	52 (18%)	17 (6%)	16 (6%)

*As noted in Table 4 above, the category "other" includes members and alternates with careers in education, science and technology, and mass organizations.

3. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE POLITICAL PROCESS

a. Further Institutionalization of the Political Process

As a result of the 13th CCP Congress, China's political process has been further institutionalized. The strengthened Standing Committee is now the principal policymaking body and a regular forum for resolving leadership conflicts. Major opponents of the reform agenda, such as Deng Liqun and Hu Qiaomu, along with other veterans, have been retired to the 200-member CCP Central Advisory Commission (CAC), the degree

of political influence of which still is not clear. Although it does not have decisionmaking authority, the CAC will continue to have influence in shaping opinion and influencing policy debates. Nevertheless, grouping major dissenters and veterans together in one body may help to ease them out of the political process. They will be at least prevented from exercising direct and divisive influence within regular policymaking organizations.

b. Zhao's Role as Consensus Builder

Zhao Ziyang's political report to the 13th Congress, which paid homage to the "four basic principles" while also emphasizing continued reform and opening to the outside world, supplied a viable policy statement concerning the substance and direction of reform in China. Of particular importance is the manner in which the report was developed. Reportedly, Zhao prepared the basic outline of the report and circulated it to several diverse groups--social scientists, scientists, central and provincial leaders--for comments. A late draft was reviewed at the Beidaihe meetings. Zhao's success at consulting influential figures and leaders and in managing the highly visible internal debates on key reform issues that ensued apparently won the favor and strong approval of Deng Xiaoping. More important, Zhao's performance as a consensus builder while serving as Acting General Secretary of the CCP convinced Deng that Zhao had sufficient political skill, management acumen, and leadership ability to be trusted as 1st Vice Chairman of the CCP Military Commission, the second-ranking military position. Acquiring this key military position clearly marks Zhao as Deng's chosen successor and affords him the opportunity to consolidate his position before Deng passes from the scene. Added to his positions as party chief and former premier, Zhao's military post completes his leadership dossier and supplies him with the means and authority to back up his policy initiatives.

With the CCP structure now in place under Political Bureau Standing Committee direction and major central-level dissent "institutionalized" in the CAC, it appears likely that disruptive campaigns threatening political and economic stability such as the spiritual pollution campaign (1983) or the anti-bourgeois liberalization campaign (early 1987) are less likely to arise. Campaigns will continue to occur because these are regular items in the CCP's political or mass-line repertoire, but they most likely will be closely supervised and probably limited and defined as "educational."

c. Decentralization of Power and Creation of a Fourth Echelon

The Congress also decentralized political power. Major urban and regional interests, particularly those with potential development problems, achieved representation on the Political Bureau and CCP-CC. This configuration should promote better communication on reform programs and help defuse any tensions or dislocations. Another development at the regional-provincial level is the emergence of a fourth echelon of leaders. These new additions to the CCP-CC membership typically are

younger, in their mid- to late 30s, probably joined the CCP after the Cultural Revolution, and have substantial expertise and education. They probably are strong supporters of the reform program.

4. IDEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

a. The Initial Stage of Socialism

The concept that China is in the initial stage of socialism, first put forth by Zhao Ziyang in spring 1987, is central to his Political Report to the 13th CCP Congress. According to Zhao's concept, the initial stage started in the mid-1950s and will continue over 100 years. The interim and essential reform period is experimental, with successes and failures, but true socialism will evolve gradually. At the early stage, socialist development requires experimentation with a variety of co-existing economic forms, both socialist and capitalist. The practical function of this concept is that it provides a basis for justifying the highly eclectic and experimental reform program, and perhaps more importantly, provides an ideological framework for reform.

b. Zhao Assumes Major Ideological Role

The concept of the initial stage of socialism is decidedly useful to Zhao in consolidating his party leadership. As CCP General Secretary, he has succeeded almost immediately in becoming identified with a major theoretical explanation of China's historical condition as it relates to modernization and reform. While Deng Xiaoping is associated with the concept of "socialism with Chinese characteristics"--the end goal of the reform program--Zhao explains why such a goal is a historical necessity and how it might be achieved. This ideological contribution, approved by the Congress and endorsed in speeches by key leaders, including Deng himself, significantly strengthens Zhao's position as Deng's successor. Zhao has acquired the august role of being an interpreter of Marxism-Leninism in light of Chinese conditions.

Zhao characterizes the lengthy reform period as a "historical period that cannot be skipped over" and plainly emphasizes the importance of practical, workable forms and solutions to development challenges. Ideology is placed at the service of successful development and acts mainly as a guide or channeling mechanism rather than an end in itself. A 26 November 1987 Guangming Ribao commentary on the "new development of Marxism" explained: "The correct theory is to revise the 'shoes' of the theories in accordance with the 'feet' of practice and to find shoes to fit on the basis of practice. Otherwise, we cannot move a single step."

5. POLICY INNOVATIONS

The length and detail of the political report to the 13th CCP Congress is indicative of the consensus reached on key economic and political issues by China's top leadership. Instead of relying on vague

generalities, the report provides specific information on areas for development.

a. Economic Initiatives

To develop the forces of production--the designated task in the "initial stage of socialism"--emphasis is placed on reducing the planned sector of the economy and allowing mixed and private as well as public forms of ownership. Under the new formula, the state plan no longer dominates while the market supplements. Instead, the state takes a more indirect approach to economic management, developing macro-economic policies that regulate rather than control markets. The new formulation is innovative in that these regulated markets are to guide the economic behavior of enterprises so that once this new system is functioning, the result will be the removal of direct CCP control over many key aspects of economic modernization. In addition, radically new economic forms, such as markets for labor, funds, science and technology, information, and even real estate are included in measures to be introduced into the economy.

b. Political Structural Reform

Plans for reform of the political structure make up one fourth of Zhao's political report. The substance and an impressive amount of detail indicate the confidence and initiative displayed by reform advocates. The report's primary goal is separating party functions from those of the government so as to focus the CCP on strengthening party affairs and organizations and to make the government structure more professional, efficient, and productive. Party cells in leading state organizations are to be abolished, as are CCP departments that overlap government counterparts. Only party cadres actively serving in a government position are to have substantive responsibilities for government work.

Ideally, the CCP is to conform and respond to party regulations and discipline while the government is to operate according to formulated codes, regulations, and laws. The emphasis is on accountability and regular procedures to replace personalized rule by individual leaders operating through guanxi (connections) networks. The projected goals are institutionalization of a system under which the CCP sets the broad policy objectives; the functions and responsibilities of government bodies, people's congresses, judicial, mass, and enterprise organizations are well-defined; and a productive dialogue is maintained throughout the system. A professional civil service, recruited through examinations in open competition, is a key reform aimed at achieving credibility and accountability. To the extent that this goal of increased institutionalization is realized in China, the party-government system will function in a more moderate and predictable fashion.

6. PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

The economic reforms endorsed by the Congress are systemic and require coordinated management for their implementation. In order to proceed successfully, they must be pursued simultaneously. Some of the major economic reforms include the "director responsibility system," which places responsibility for the economic performance of an enterprise with its manager; the establishment of lateral economic ties to encourage economic cooperation and coordination across the economy; implementation of price reform to better reflect the real value of commodities and precious resources; and private ownership and rewards, according to talents and risks endured, to stimulate growth and initiative. The parts of the economic reform program are interlocking and no one reform can proceed entirely independent of others.

a. The Challenge to Party Authority

The economic reforms provide a real challenge to party authority because they are predicated upon systemic changes taking hold in social and political relationships in China, a development that could seriously unbalance the whole social and political system and thereby threaten the success of the reform program. By removing party cadres from the economic hierarchy, the CCP must forfeit direct control over many key aspects of economic modernization. With the organizational functions of non-party bodies being more carefully defined, the party's role is more sharply focused, but thereby circumscribed within set limits.

At the vice ministerial, provincial, municipal, and county or middle levels--where the system of administration must perform well for the reform program to succeed--the party's interests seem most clearly threatened. Economic functions are being transferred to enterprise managers; major government functions seem destined to be better performed by professional civil servants; and the emphasis on increased dialogue on issues circumvents the party's authoritative voice in local affairs. Awareness of the existing sensitivity of this middle strata probably has delayed central approval for holding elections to provincial and municipal-level people's congresses, organizations that could further challenge party authority and policies at these key levels.

b. Other Potential Obstacles to Reform

China's economic performance under the reform program will strongly influence the political, social, and cultural realms. As Zhao relates in the political report: "The deepening of reform will bring about a still more profound readjustment in the relations between the interests of different sectors of society, and it is not possible that there should be no obstacles." Detractors or opponents of reform measures could use any serious problems such as budget deficits, inflation, disparities in income, production shortfalls, natural disasters, or other dislocations to further stall, undermine, or overturn reform programs. While existing opponents, or individuals who might in the future perceive their interests to be threatened by reform measures, appear to lack a major spokesman in a

key position in Beijing, the reconfigured Central Advisory Commission (CAC), replete with veteran and dissenting leaders, has potential for exercising increased influence in defining political goals, if conditions sour. Specifically, it might serve as a power base for more conservative members on the Political Bureau Standing Committee.

c. Zhao Ziyang's Succession Projects

Although Deng Xiaoping is described as the chief architect of reforms in China, Zhao Ziyang now has assumed a prestigious role by defining the historical stage of China's development. But in his new party role, Zhao now must deal with problems of corruption and abuses of power. Because remedies to these problems often challenge entrenched and powerful interests, Zhao's political skills, strong as they appear to be, will be severely challenged. Nevertheless, with the new leadership in place in key organizations of power and apparently supportive of Zhao and the reform program, Zhao's prospects for succeeding Deng and continuing leadership of the reform program appear promising.

7. CONCLUSIONS

The 13th CCP Congress produced a younger, better educated leadership, further institutionalized the Chinese political process, and provided an ideological basis and justification for reform. Policy initiatives were introduced and clarified, particularly proposals concerning political structural reform. Systemic by nature, these and other reforms will provoke opposition, especially from the middle levels of the party where established party authority is most significantly challenged. Elsewhere, opposition will arise from those who perceive their interests undercut by reform initiatives. Opposition concerns may well be articulated by the conservative Central Advisory Commission, which might in turn serve as a base of support for conservative members of the Political Bureau Standing Committee. Crucial to maintaining political stability are the coordinated management of reform initiatives and the realization of demonstrable economic benefits. With the new leadership in place in key organizations of power and apparently supportive of new CCP General Secretary Zhao Ziyang, prospects for Zhao's continued leadership of the reform program and political support for continued implementation of the reform agenda appear reasonably good.